A CONFERENCE

Betwixt a Modern

Atheist,

AND HIS

FRIEND.

BY THE

METHODIZER

OF THE

Second Spira.

LONDON,

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THE

PREFACE.

LUcilius Vaninus *in his Dialogues, wrote a* Mock Apology for the Christian Religion, *wherein he amass'd all the Malice and wit that he or his Abettors cou'd bestow upon the Professors thereof; his design was on purpose to expose, and ridicule our* Holy Religion. *But what I have here advanc'd, tho' I had thought to have return'd the Complement to the Modern* Rabbi's *of* Atheism, *is only to remove*

remove the prejudices & unreaſonableneſs of thoſe that either own no God; or at leaſt deny the Separate Exiſtence and Immortality of the Soul, *I think there are but few of the* firſt. *But upon my own perſonal Knowledge there's too many of the* laſt Opinion. *And my frequent converſe with ſome of 'em has given me more Opportunity to know wherein the ſtrength (forgive the word) of their Arguing Conſiſts. The Ingenious and learned Mr.* Bently *who I muſt acknowledge in this Diſcourſe has already ſo Managed the point of* Matter and Motion's not thinking, *that they have quitted their pretenſions to that* Topic; *and now they ſay he has committed an* Ignorantia Elenchi, *in proving what they deny not, tho' I'm well aſſured they vigorouſly aſſerted before,*

fore, affirming that the Soul was only a purer and more ſubtile ſort of Matter. *Their preſent Subterfuge is,* the Soul is only a Modification of an Organiz'd Body, *and that it cannot* Exiſt *after its Separation, no more than the* Modification *of Matter can exiſt without its* Subject.

Since I had finiſhed this ſmall Diſcourſe, I find another reviv'd Opinion amongſt them, that the World was from Eternity in ſtatu quo; *and that* Derodon's *Arguments (followed by moſt of our Modern Diſputants) do not at all prove the contrary in taking any intermediate Chain, no more than it proves God Almighty was not from Eternity, ſince any Intermediate Chain of time may be taken out from his Eternity, as well as out of that of the Worlds: This I have only mention'd that if better Pens do not*

engage it by other Arguments, I ſhall eſſay to do it my ſelf.

As to the following Diſcourſe I have endeavour'd to prove, that the Exiſtence of a God is more evident than any Mathematick demonſtration, *by ſo much as Principles, and ſimple Ideas are more evident than Complex and tedious conſequences.* That the Soul *is a* Subſtance Immaterial, eſſentially thinking, *and* not any Modification of Matter *as our Modern Deiſts aſſert; as alſo that the* Soul Muſt Exiſt in its Individuality in a State ſeparate from the Body, *and in that State be* ſenſible of pain or Pleaſure; *this I hope I have evidently ſhown from the Fundamental and Conſtitutive principles of humane reaſon, ſo that unleſs they can prove themſelves of another ſpecies, I can't tell how they can evade what I have advanced*

vanced; the reaſon of my proceſs in this tract is taken from their frequent calling upon us to prove the Exiſtence of the Soul, God &c. *by Principles as evident as* Mathematic Demonſtration; *and I have hereafter by Compariſon with ſome of the plaineſt Axioms in* Euclid *ſatisfied their demands; 'tis true indeed* Mathematick Demonſtration *has the good Luck to meet with little oppoſition, tho' I doubt not but it wou'd find enough, if each demonſtration was ſome Canon of the Chriſtian Church, and I dare undertake to prove, that there's not one Theoreme in all the* 15 *Books of* Euclid, *but what a ſceptical perſon might have better reaſon to quarrel with, than the* Exiſtence of a God; *for even* Mathematick Demonſtration *depends upon theſe very principles, or others as evident, which I make*

uſe

uſe of to prove that God Exiſts, *and I doubt not but that a Mathematician that is a good Logician might bring all dubious diſputes out of Queſtion by firſt laying down evident Poſtulates after the manner that I have done in that one Inſtance of proving the* Exiſtence of a God.

I am ſenſible that there are many pens much fitter for ſuch a Task than mine, and the Reaſon why I engag'd in it was partly from the opportunities I have had to converſe with theſe Gentlemen, and partly becauſe I have been inſtrumental in bringing the Relation of the ſecond Spira *into the World, without that full atteſtation as was neceſſary to ſatisfie the Age of the truth of it, much leſs to Convince theſe ſort of Perſons whom I have here to*

deal

deal with. I am yet certain as well as ſeveral others, that there was ſuch a matter of Fact as is there related; I cannot ſay of my own knowledge how agreeable in every particular Circumſtance, and therefore own a forward Imprudence *of being concern'd in it, whatever my Motive was; and I could heartily wiſh that every act of my Life, which has in its own Nature tended, or been accidentally wreſted by others to the prejudice of the Chriſtian Religion had never been, tho the Purchaſe had coſt me all that is valuable to me in the World: This is the Chief Motive of my preſent Engagement, and that theſe Gentlemen may be aſſured that I believe Religion has no need of indirect methods, or Pious Frauds to keep up its Reputation; I have here prov'd from the Principles of that Reaſon in*

which

which they pretend a ſhare (and upon which Mathematick Demonſtration depends, as I ſaid before) that Religion has a ſolid and good Foundation, viz. *That* God is: *That the* Soul is Immortal and muſt exiſt ſenſible of Happineſs or Miſery, tho' in a ſtate ſeparate from the Body.

I might have proceeded to have ſhown, that in a ſeparate State the Soul is only imployed in reflect Act's and the Conſequences of 'em, and therefore not anſwerable for any thing done out of the Body. That from the Nature of the Soul, Religion is as neceſſary to its happineſs as its own Exiſtence; that by how much the more perfect any Religion is, by ſo much the Analogy betwixt the Soul and it is the ſtricter; and

Laſtly,

Laſtly, I might from hence have made thoſe common Deductions, that are uſual, but I have contented my ſelf with fixing the firſt foundations of all this, I deſign a further Improvement of what I have already done, which I am ſenſible is defective enough. Therefore ſuch as pleaſe to lend their aſſiſtance, or have any Objections to offer, know where my Bookſeller *lives, and may in time have an Anſwer by ſome Pen or other.*

A N

There is now in the Preſs.

AN *Account of the Converſion of* Theodore John, *a late Teacher among the Jews; together with his Confeſſion of the* Chriſtian Faith, *which he delivered immediately before he was* Baptized, *in the preſence of the* Lutheran Congregation, *in the German Church, in Little* Trinity Lane, London. *On the* 23*d. Sunday after Trinity, in the thirty firſt of* October, *in the Year of our Lord God,* 1692.

Tranſlated out of *High-Dutch* into Engliſh.

DIALOGUE I.

That the Existence of a God *and a* Thinking Principle *in us, is more evident than any* Mathematic Demonstration.

Eraſtus. WELL met Eugenes, *how far this way?*

Eugenes. I'm taking my uſual

Mornings walk; I'm for all the wiſe proviſion I can make for my *Body*, for when I loſe *this*, I know not where I ſhall get another.

Eraſtus. *Why, truly you act the wiſeſt part that a* Brute *is capable of.*

Eug. Under favour Sir, you and I are nothing elſe but *Brutes*, and if we have any priviledge above *Lions and Foxes* 'tis from a more Exquiſite Fabric; our clockwork is ſomething finer than theirs, and our Organs are more appoſite and proper for abſtracted perception.

Eraſtus. *If you are for ſuch Speculations*, Eugenes, *yonder is a Curious Grove; ſhall we retire thither for an Hour? There we may think more freely of theſe things.*

Eugenes. You mean, grow melancholly and Enthuſiaſtick, Dream of Extatick Pleaſures, and I know not what Raptures; and then be vext at the miſtake as ſoon as the Humour on't is over.

Eraſtus. *No, Eugenes, I think a wiſe and good Man is never ſo happy as when he is himſelf awake, and in the ſeve-*

ſevereſt Exerciſe of his Reaſon.

Eugenes, You talk of Reaſon, as if you had forgot our laſt Diſcourſe, when you know I'm a ſworn Enemy to every thing that bears that Name, unleſs it be as evident as *Mathematick Demonſtration*; if you can give me any diſcoveries of what you call *Soul*, *God*, &c. Upon theſe Principles then, we'll fetch a Turn or two in yonder Grove, or elſe I muſt beg your pardon, If I call another Subject, or take my leave of you.

Eraſt. *Very well*, Eugenes, *I'll promiſe you then to prove what you call upon me for, either by* Mathematick Demonſtration, *or which is all one, by the ſame Principles which that depends upon.*

Eugenes. Indeed, *Eraſtus* a fair promiſe! tho' perhaps I hate ſolitude as much as any Man, yet I will endure the Pennance for once, rather than deprive my ſelf of ſuch a diſcovery. Let's be going.

Eraſtus. *You oblige me*, Eugenes, *with this opportunity, and ſince you are*

a Philoſopher, and a Mathematitian, *I ſhan't be under that conſtraint in what I have to ſay, as if I were to furniſh you with Senſe to underſtand me.*

Eugenes. You are pleaſed to ſpeak better of me than I deſerve; but whither are we got now? I believe (to ſpeak in your Phraſe) the *Spirit of thinking* dwells amongſt theſe ſhades, for I no ſooner enter, but a thouſand Chains of Thoughts offer their firſt Link to me; perhaps I ſhall forget that I have a Body by and by.

Eraſtus. *We'll conſider the reaſon of that Jeſt preſently. You ſay you are for* Demonſtration Eugenes, *and Truth which is the foundation thereof, muſt lye very deep for ſuch a Noble Superſtructure: I think it won't be amiſs to ſuſpect every thing, and admit nothing for truth but that which evidently compells our aſſent, and then tho we find not out all Truths, yet we ſhall get clear of many Errors.*

Eugenes. I like the Thought extreamly

treamly well. We'll ſuppoſe then that every thing in the World is falſe; nay, we'll imagin that there is no *World*, *Men*, or other exiſtence, nor any *Matter*, nor by Conſequence, any *Modifications* of *things which are not.*

Eraſtus. *But when we have doubted of the Exiſtence of* Truth *and* Falſhood, Matter, *and its* Accidents *or* Modifications, *we can't* doubt, *or* think *that we do not* think or Exiſt; *to ſay that* I think I am not, *is to ſay that* I that think am not I, *which is abſurd, for* I that think muſt Exiſt to think; *and if* I *ceaſe to* Exiſt, I *alſo ceaſe to* think, for thinking is an Act *(in my Opinion)* and there's no act without an Agent, *ſo that whether we will or no we muſt aſſent to this Truth, that we (I mean not our Bodies) are* thinking Beings.

Eugenes. Hold *Eraſtus*, I like not that Parentheſis, I muſt have the *Body* to come in for a ſhare of Thought, and not any *unknown We*

independant of our Bodies.

Eraſtus. *That it is not our Bodies or any Modification of them, that think; I ſhall prove hereafter, but ſince you will not grant that yet; you muſt aſſent that* we *(take it in what Latitude you pleaſe)* are thinking Beings.

Eugenes. This is a dark *Metaphyſical* Speculation, and if I ſhou'd grant it, I ſee not what uſe you could make of it; But where's your *Mathematical Demonſtration*, or ſomething Equivalent to it? for 'tis that *I came* for.

Eraſtus. *You ſhall have it* Eugenes, *only firſt lay down the plaineſt Demonſtration that you can, as an Inſtance to Compare with what I ſhall bring.*

Eugenes. Take this *Axiom* then, *Things equal to the ſame third are alſo equal to one another*, for Inſtance A *is equal to* B. B *is equal to* C, *therefore* A *is equal to* C. *or therefore* A *B and* C *are equal amongſt themſelves.*

Eraſtus. *You are certain of this Demonſtration then?*

Eugenes. Yes.

Eraſt.

Eraſtus. *Very well, now this* Demonſtration *preſuppoſes that A is equal to* B, *before it can be equal to* C, *Nay that there are ſuch things in nature as* A B *and* C, *before there can be an equality amongſt them for* nothing has no propriety. *And after all, when you come by plain Evidence to be aſſur'd of their Equalities, it follows that you who are thus aſſur'd muſt upon neceſſity* think *and* Exiſt *before you can have any ſuch aſſurance. What think you now,* Eugenes, *if you can make no* Demonſtration *but that you muſt firſt* think *and* Exiſt, *Nay if you ſometimes take* Paralogiſms *for* Demonſtrations, *is not your Exiſtence as a* thinking being, *more certain than any* Mathematical Demonſtration, *eſpecially ſince* this *depends on* that, *and ſince you Can't prove the* laſt *without proving the* firſt *at the ſame time.*

Eugenes. I grant I can object nothing againſt what you bring without proving my own *Exiſtence* and *thought*, but the difficulty yet returns

upon you, for tho I am a *thinking Being*, how does it follow that this, *I that think* is what you call *Soul*, or that there are ſuch things as *immaterial ſubſtances* (in my ſence *pure Nothings* if not Matter)

Eraſtus. *Let us not go too faſt* Eugenes, *we have now diſcovered one certain Truth, according to your own Conceſſion*, viz. That we are thinking Beings; *which I ſhall note down for the firſt Axiom, That if we ſhould hereafter have occaſion to uſe it, we may take it for granted to avoid Repetitions or after Proofs. But in order to remove that difficulty which you labour under*, about a Soul or a Body, or both together, being capable of thinking: *We muſt firſt prove that there is ſomething elſe that Exiſts, you know we are* to take nothing for granted, *which we do not firſt Examin.*

Axiom 1ſt.

Eugenes. Let us then renew our firſt ſuppoſition, *that there is no Matter or other* Exiſtence *beſides our ſelves*; Whom we have proved to *Exiſt and think.*

Eraſt.

Eraſtus. *Whilſt I think* Eugenes *I conceive amongſt other things, that I have a degree of* Conſtancy, Pitty, Juſtice, Knowledge, Power, *&c. For I daily exert them, that I'm deficient in my happineſs, in ſhort that I have ſuch Ideas of perfection in me, as by Compariſon ſhow that there is a perfection which I have not, or that ſomething elſe is more perfect than I, and that tho' I* Exiſt *to* day *I know not whether I ſhall* Exiſt *to Morrow. Now ſince [illegible] are for diſtinct and clear Evidence before you give your aſſent, take this* Dilemma, *either I received theſe degrees of* Knowledge, Power, *&c. or I have them of my ſelf.*

Eug. Your *Dilemma* is good enough.

Eraſt. *If I have this* Power, Knowledge, *&c of my ſelf according to the little degree of perfection, which I am ſenſible of; then by the ſame reaſon I have of my ſelf what I have, I might have had all the remainder that I find I want, and ſo have been* All-wiſe, Almighty, Immutable, Infinite, *and what other Ideas I have of Perfection, but this is impoſſible.*

possible. Therefore that I received what I have is certain

Eug. It is very evident that you have received your Being, and what you are capable of, by vertue of your Being; But whence did you receive this *Being? Hic labor, hoc opus est.*

Eraſt. *I'll tell you,* Eugenes; *but firſt let us make ſure work on't as we go along, and ſee how far we are yet got into Certainty and Evidence. You before granted that we are* Thinking Beings, *and now we have advanc'd another ſtep,* That our Exiſtence is imperfect, and produc'd by ſecond ſomething elſe. *Which I'll mark down for a ſecond* Axiom. Axiom

Eug. But you have not ſhewed that this laſt *Axiom* is as certain as *Mathematical Demonſtration.*

Eraſt. *'Tis built on the ſame principles, which is the ſame thing; that we are* imperfect *is evident, ſince we are ignorant in ſeveral things, nay are ſick and dye too, which is an evil that we have naturally the greateſt averſneſs to, and yet we can avoid it,* therefore we are imperfect, *and that we are produced by ſomething with*

out

out us depends upon this principle, Nothing can work before it has a Being, *we could not produce our Selves before we were, therefore we are produced by Something else, this is much more evident, than that these two figures which I take to be* 3 *and* 5 *make* 8, *because this last is a more* compound consequence, *since it does not only depend upon reason but the senses too, which are frequently deceived, tho' what I evidently apprehend by my* reason, *cannot deceive me.*

Eug. I'm satisfied in the Evidence of the last *Axiom*, therefore if you please proceed.

Eras. *That which communicated to me* what I am and what I have, *cannot be inferior to me, for as* nothing can produce nothing, *so* the less perfect can't produce the more perfect.

Eugenes. Ho'd *Erastus*, since you note down all my Concessions, I may injure Truth as well as my own pretensions by granting too much, you ought to explain your self what you mean by Inferior, &c.

Erastus. *That tho' a fool may be-*

beget a Man wiſer than himſelf, and therefore inferior to him in ſome reſpects, yet a fool begets ſomething Naturally equal to him, as being in the ſame Claſſis of Creatures; he does not beget an Angel, nor does a horſe beget an Elephant, Equivocal Generation is now ſufficiently exploded, and therefore I need ſay no more of that to you who know it as well as I, ſo that in ſhort I mean this, that the firſt man that was (as we ſay) created, could not be produced by a Tree, *a* mine, *or a dull lump of Earth, But by ſomething Superior in Nature to himſelf.*

Eugenes. I don't yet look upon this to be a conſequence, for tho' *a Tree, or mine,* could not produce a man, yet there might be ſuch an adapt and proper fermentation of *Trees, Mines, Water, Heat,* &c. which in ſuch a progreſs of time might produce a man as in your *Chymical Experiments,* many things of different nature will at length produce a *Phænomenon* very different from the firſt Ingredients.

Eraſtus.

Eraſt. *Well ſuppoſe that*, Eugenes, *but it does you no Service, unleſs ſome of theſe Chymical Products cou'd think and ſpeak Senſe; Matter only produces Matter, and not ſo different from the firſt as you imagine, for there are many latent Qualities in Bodies, even diſcern'd to be ſo by the Taſt, which will not appear to the Eye, till ſuch and ſuch Operations have paſt upon them. But why do you thus argue againſt your own Philoſophy? Our later Experiments ſhew us that there is no Equivocal Generation, but that every thing produces its like after a Natural way. Beſides there can be no* Mechanick Formation *of a Man, according to the Gravation and ſettled Laws of the* Motion of Matter.

Eug. But in Fermentations and Motions, Matter ſuffers violence, and the heavier might ſometimes get above the lighter, and amongſt the infinite variety of the turnings, windings, and juſtlings of different

Particles together, there might have been juſt ſuch a lucky hit as the Formation of a Man.

Eraſt. *If there had, the very next motion would have thrown it into pieces again, being new and tender. But pray,* Eugenes, *ſince you are a better Anatomiſt than I, conſider the numerous parts of a Man's Body, any three of which, if alternately ſubſtituted in one anothers place, would ſpoil the whole Fabrick. Now, if we ſuppoſe but a Thouſand parts for the proper frame and Offices of a Man's Body which are abſolutely neceſſary for it, and without which it would be deſtroy'd: How many Alternations and different Poſitions would there be of a Thouſand in a right line, a Cube, a Pyramid, a Cone, and the innumerable variety of other irregular Bodies.*

Eug. Indeed I remember *Tacquet* (*Arithmetic. cap. de progreſſione*) ſays, that the 24 Letters would admit of more

more different Changes and Alternations than a Million of Millions of Writers cou'd exhauſt in a Million of Millions of Years; and I am ſatisfy'd it is probable enough, the Conſequent place being continually multiply'd into the Sum of all the Antecedents.

Eraſt. *What infinite flux of time then would be requir'd for* 1000 *to be diverſly alternated? For ſo many particles of Duſt would make more ſolid different Figures and Bodies than the whole compaſs of the Heavens, even as high as the fixed Stars, would contain.*

Eug. Well, *Eraſtus*, but though I grant it the greateſt improbability in the World for a Man to be thus made, yet 'tis not impoſſible, for ſuch a Chance might hit as well as another, ſince there is ſuch an one in the *power of Changes.*

Eraſt. *We'll grant you the poſſibility of Particles juſtling into ſuch a Figure, but then 'tis not in the power of Motion to give what we call* Life, Thinking, *&c. that muſt be from a Superiour Power, I ſpeak in reference to the firſt Man, and afterwards by an Univocal Generation according to the ſetled Order and Chain of Cauſes in Nature.*

Eug. Why ſo, Eraſtus?

Eraſt. *Becauſe a Man is not made up of dry Duſt, 'tis not only the Shape or Figure, but the Internal Organization, Veins, Arteries, Muſcles, Nerves, Animal Spirits, Blood, Serum, and other different Compoſitions, which, as I ſaid before, according to the Mechaniſm of Nature, and the ſpecifick Laws of Gravitation, muſt ſome of them ſubſide, others which are lighter muſt be thruſt up to make room for the ſubſiding parts; ſo that from the Premiſes there's*

there's an abſolute impoſſibility in Nature to produce ſuch Formations.

Eug. Indeed I can't well ſee how it muſt be done, therefore I have nothing to plead further but Matter of Fact, you ſee it is done.

Eraſt. *Your Plea is good, if we can find no other Cauſe beſides a blind Chance.*

Eug. But, *Eraſtus*, what think you of a Tree, is there not ſolid Boughs actually higher than the lighter *Succus Nutrivus* and bark in ſome parts, contrary to what you call Specifick Gravitation of deſcending Bodies?

Eraſt. *I ſay the ſame of Trees which I ſay of Men, the firſt Trees were immediately made by that Almighty Power who ſettled the Laws of Nature, and continues them now by Univocal Generation, as it does Men. And the*

ſame Arguments may be made uſe of, to ſhew that the firſt Trees could not be made by the fortuitous juſtlings of Atoms and fine Particles of Matter, but that there is an Intelligent, Wiſe Author in the Deſignation of them, as is further evident to ſuch as read Dr. Grew, Monſieur Redi, Malpighius, *and others, who have ſearch'd into their Nature, and diſſected them, for* Microſcopick Experiments.

Eug. I muſt confeſs there is an impoſſibility in a Man's being produced Originally by the *Material Mechaniſm of Nature*, and the Laws thereof.

Eraſt. *Well, and you muſt grant an Argument* ab impoſſibili *in Morals to be as Concluſive, as that* 3 *and* 4 *cannot make* 8 *in Mathematicks, according to the Values and Ideas that are affixt to them. Therefore I ſhall lay down this third* Axiom, Axiom 3. Mankind is not Originally

nally produc'd by the Laws of Matter and Motion. *Let us now return to proſecute the Origination of Mankind elſewhere. I ſaid before, that I have a degree of* Juſtice, Knowledge, Power, *&c. which from* Axiom 2. is imperfect, and deriv'd from ſomething without, *I ſhall now lay down another Evident Maxim to build upon,* viz. Nothing can communicate or give what it has not.

Eug. Very true.

Eraſt. Therefore that which communicated my Being *to me, and by vertue of my Being gave me to be (in ſome degree)* Juſt, Knowing, Powerful, *&c. muſt alſo be a* Being *which has in itſelf* Juſtice, Power, Knowledge, *&c.*

Eug. The Conſequence is undeniable.

Eraſt. *Let us proceed then. This* Being *is* Juſt, Powerful, Knowing, *&c. in ſome limited meaſure, or to perfection.*

Eug. He admit the *Dilemma.*

Eraſt. *If this Being that Communicated my* Being, *&c. to me is imperfectly* Juſt, Knowing, Powerful, *&c. then it either has theſe Properties of it ſelf, or receiv'd them; not the* firſt, *becauſe (as I ſaid before of my ſelf) from the ſame Reaſon that it has of it ſelf that little it participates of Perfection, from the ſame Reaſon it might have given to it ſelf the remainder of what it wanted: If the* laſt, *then it muſt receive its* Being *and what it has by vertue of its* Being, *from ſome other* Being *which is yet more* Juſt, Powerful, Knowing, *from the above Maxim, that* Nothing gives what it has not, *and that Third* Being *from a Fourth yet more perfect,*

that

that fourth from a fifth, and ſo on till we come ſooner or later to the firſt Being, *which is* Infinitely Perfect, neceſſarily Exiſtent, All-wiſe, Powerful, Knowing, *and Poſſeſſing all other Ideas which we have of Perfection.——Why don't you Anſwer me* Eugenes, *or do you expect a Mathematical Demonſtration of the* Exiſtence *of this* infinitely perfect Being.

Eug. Come then, let me have it to obviate what otherwiſe I might object.

Eraſt. *In* Mathematick Demonſtration *there is preſuppos'd ſuch and ſuch* Poſtulates *or* Axioms, *without which the Demonſtration falls; therefore I lay down theſe following, which you muſt either admit, or make your Objections before I can proceed any farther.*

Poſtu-

Poſtulates.

1. Nothing gives what it has not.
2. That which has, can give, or communicate of that which it has.
3. I have ſome degree of Power, Knowledge, *&c.*
4. My Exiſtence is Communicated from without.
5. A Sum ſuppoſes a Unite from which the whole is derived.
6. Succeſſion ſuppoſes a beginning both in *Time* and *Order*.

I think

I think *Eugenes* theſe Poſtulates are very reaſonable. The two firſt are ſelf evident, the third depends upon Matter of Fact, the fourth has its Riſe from the preceding ſecond *Axiom* which you have granted: ſhou'd you deny the fifth, you would contradict your own Principles, and call the Elements of that Demonſtration into Queſtion, which you have made the Standard of this Diſpute. If you deny the laſt, you muſt admit ſome Infinities to be ſhorter then others, by any one Intermediate Chain, I mean in reſpect of Time, and in Relation to Degrees or Order of Perfection, it is the very ſame.

Eug.

Eug. Indeed, *Eraſtus*, this is a new way of Argumentation to me, tho' not in the leaſt contradictory to my Reaſon; I freely admit of your *Poſtulates*, pray let me have your Inference.

Eraſt. *They carry their own Concluſion in them — I have* (a) *ſome degrees of* Power, Knowledge, *&c. which I received* (b) *from ſomething without, which alſo has* (c) Power, Knowledge, *&c. either* (d) *perfectly, or derivatively* (e) *from ſomething which is alſo* (f) *perfectly or imperfectly* (g) Knowing, Powerful, *&c. If the* firſt, *I have what I plead for immediately; if the* laſt, *I have alſo what I want*, (h) *tho' at a greater diſtance; therefore there is ſuch a firſt* Being, *who is perfectly* Knowing, Powerful, *&c. and who enjoys all other degrees of Perfection,*

(a) Poſt. 3.
(b) Poſt. 4.
(c) Poſt. 1, 5.
(d) See laſt Dilemma.
(e) Poſt. 4.
Idem Dilem.
(f) Idem Dilem.
(g) Poſt. 1, 2.
(h) Poſt. 5, 6

on, whereof we have Ideas. And this I call God.

You ſeem, Eugenes, to be diſſatisfy'd, and ſuſpect that by this way of Reaſoning I have put ſome fallacy upon you, but you don't at all doubt but that you have a Body, that there is Matter under ſeveral diſpoſitions and modes, That the three Angles of a Triangle are equal to two right ones, becauſe you, and Euclid before you, could demonſtrate that it is ſo: But what is there that aſſures you that there is ſuch a thing in Nature as a Triangle? What Demonſtration can you make of it, ſince you talk of Mathematical Certainty? You'll Anſwer, perhaps, that your Eyes are good, that you have a proper Medium to diſcern, and that your Memory and Practice concur, as alſo the Teſtimony of others that are Competent Judges, —— Be it ſo, and if poſſible find yet better Arguments, and you'll only more clearly prove that you who thus Reaſon upon a Triangle, muſt certainly exiſt

your ſelf, and your Exiſtence being imperfect and dependant, it yet proves a perfect and independant one *from the above* Poſtulates, *which maintains and preſerves yours, ſo that the Chain is certain and fixt, and there is no proving that there's a Triangle, or any Geometrick Certainty, unleſs we preſuppoſe the Exiſtence of an Infinite* Perfect and firſt Being, *which after a certain manner compriſes Men, Matter, and Mathematical Reaſoning in its Nature.*

Eug. I muſt confeſs, *Eraſtus,* that there is *a Being infinitely perfect* in Wiſdom, Power, *&c.* and ſince the uſe of Words is only to expreſs our *Mental Reaſonings*, ſo as to make them Intelligible to another, I am willing you ſhould call this *Being* a *GOD*: But what is this *GOD* as to his Eſſence and Nature?

Eraſt. *Read*

Eraſt. *Read him in the Legible Characters which he has impreſs'd on your own Mind, from the preceding firſt and ſecond* Poſtulates, *he is whatever you could wiſh or deſire as a Perfection to your own Nature,* viz. *Eternal, Wiſe,* &c.

Eug. Why Eternal, *Eraſtus?*

Eraſt. *Have not you ſome degrees of Conſtancy and Reſolution, and could not you wiſh that your Exiſtence was made perfect, and unalterable by any flux of Time?*

Eug. Yes.

Eraſt. *Suppoſe the ſame of all the reſt of his Attributes. Now, you being a Communication, or more properly an Emanation from this Infinite* Being, *may reflect upon your ſelf, and think that whatſoever you could wiſh (I mean as a perfection to your Na-*

ture) is in that Being, *and 'tis a large ſhare of Knowledge that we apprehend ſo much of him. We ſay we have a clear and diſtinct Idea of a* Triangle, *when we know that* 'tis a Superficies bounded by three Lines; *alſo of* Matter, *when we ſay 'tis* Bulk extended into Length, Breadth, and Depth: *Tho' no* Geometer *in the World knows all the Properties in a* Triangle, *or* Philoſopher *that underſtands all the* Phænomena of Matter. *Thus we have a clear and diſtinct Idea of* God, *when by examining our own Nature we find it deriv'd from a* Being Infinitely Powerful, Omniſcient, Juſt, Good, Eternal, *&c. 'Tis true indeed he does not come under the Cognizance of our Senſes, we cannot feel, ſee, ſmell, taſt, or hear him, theſe Organs were given us to exerciſe them about Matter; and as no one ſmells with his Eyes or Ears, nor fooliſhly concludes that there are no Colours, becauſe he cannot taſt them; ſo it would be the ſame folly in us to conclude there*

is

is no God, becauſe we can't ſee his Nature and Eſſence.

Eug. Enough, *Eraſtus*, if your Deſign is to conclude that we are *Imperfect Thinking Beings*, and that there is *a perfect thinking* Being, *from which every thing that Exiſts receives its Exiſtence*; you need trouble your ſelf no further, for I'm abundantly ſatisfied in it already.

Dialogue II.

That the Soul is not Thought, nor any Modification of the Body, *which neceſſarily ceaſes to Exiſt upon the Indiſpoſition or Diſſolution of the Body.*

Eugenes. I Am ſufficiently aſſur'd, *Eraſtus*, of the Exiſtence of a God, and I think there are but few amongſt ſuch as are call'd Atheiſts, than can (if they dare think) doubt of his Exiſtence, for the wiſe Conſtructure of the World, the wonderful Contrivance of

of Humane Bodies, nay, even the moſt contemptible Inſects, if examin'd by a Microſcope, do exhibit to us the moſt Legible Characters of a Deity: But there's yet a greater Difficulty behind. You talk ſometimes of an *Immateria Subſtance* in us, which you ca' Soul.

Eraſt. *Well*, Eugenes, *and wh do you call it?*

Eug. I have had two Opinio about it, that which at preſent entertain is, that 'tis nothing el but *Thought*, and admitting this I meet with no difficulty in the diſinition, for I have an Idea of Thou as diſtinct and clear as that of *Mo tion* or *Matter*.

Eraſt. *Truly*, Eugenes, *this i very ſhort cut through the vaſt Diff ties that* the Learned in all Na and Ages *have ſtruggled under*;

what Reaſon have you for this Opinion?

Eug. When I compare this with what you call *Soul*, I find that they are the very ſame, ſo far as we can conceive of either.

Eraſt. *Inſtance in one of the moſt conſiderable Analogies.*

Eug. What you call *Soul* is influenced by the Conſtitution of the Body, and is accordingly ſad, joyful, *&c.* which are only *various modifications of Thought*, and may be eaſily ſolv'd as ſuch; you call them various Diſpoſitions of the *Soul*, I ſee no difference but the Expreſſion.

Eraſt. *I remember in our former Diſcourſes you aſſerted, That the Soul (or what you now call* Thought) *was only the* Modification of Matter fitly Organiz'd, *but now according to this*

this laſt Opinion, we ſhall have a Modification of Modifications; *and if we purſue this Notion, we muſt loſe our ſelves in Diviſions and Sub-diviſions; Juſt as a Cube may have a ſpot of white upon it, this white may be extended ſo far, this Extenſion may be in ſuch a Figure, and ſo on,* ad infinitum. *But,* Eugenes, *let's keep cloſe to the Buſineſs; ſince the Body is* Matter, *and* Matter *under* Modifications *is infinitely ſubdivided, is the* Soul *the firſt* Modification, *or one of the* ſubſequent ones?

Eug. The firſt of all.

Eraſt. *Then we have fixt its place. A Body ſo and ſo Organiz'd gives ſuch a* Modification, *and this* Modification *is what you call a* Soul *or* Thought; *then if the* Modification *changes, the Soul is no more; as in a Cube, if the ſame bulk be made a* Globe, *tho' the* Matter *remains, yet the Cubick Figure ceaſes to be: Do*

I rightly apprehend your meaning?

Eug. Yes; for as I can have no Idea of a *Cubick* or *Globular* Figure, unleſs I preſuppoſe Matter the Subject of it; So I can have no Idea of what you call *Soul*, unleſs I preſuppoſe an Organiz'd Body, its Subject.

Eraſt. *A very happy Hypotheſis, if truth, for avoiding the miſery of after Retributions, 'tis well for you if Utility does paſs into Argument—— But,* Eugenes, *if the* Soul *can't ſubſiſt without the* Body, *no more than any* Modification of Matter *can exiſt without the* Subject; *And if this* Soul *is wholly dependent upon the* Body, *and always influenc'd by it, according to the Complexion, as* Sanguine, Cholerick, *&c. What's the Reaſon that when I am well, airy, and vigorous, I ſhould conclude that three and two makes five, alſo when in Sad, Languiſhing, and* Melancholy Tempe-

Temperament, I ſhould ſtill make the ſame Concluſion? I don't ſee how this proves the Soul *to be dependant upon the Conſtitution of the* Body.

Eug. I diſtinguiſh between a *Natural* and a *Moral Conſtitution*; by *Moral (a Mos)* I mean the *Manner or Habit of the Body*, whereby I receive Pain or Pleaſure, and think accordingly, making Concluſions that are determin'd from ſuch and ſuch a *Habit*. By *Natural Conſtitution* I underſtand my *Eſſential frame*, by which *I am what I am*, and having a Habit of Reaſon, as part of my *Eſſential Conſtitution*, ſo long as my Being is not deſtroy'd, (I mean ſuch a due and proper Mechaniſm of Organs) I muſt always by vertue of that *Conſtitution* infer that Two and Three are Five; I can *think* without this *Moral Conſtitution*, but without the *Natural* I cannot.

Eraſt. *This*

Eraſt. *This is a late invented ſubterfuge,* Eugenes; *not long ſince, the* Soul was a purer ſort of Matter, *and now* 'tis Thought, or a Modification of the Body, *which ceaſes when the Subject alters. Truth ſeldom changes ſhape to gain our aſſent; But however, in Anſwer to both your* Moral *and* Natural *Conſtitution at once,* Do you think or no, *Engenes?*

Eug. Yes, *Eraſtus,* I do think.

Eraſt. *And you aſſert that the Soul is Thought?*

Eug. Yes.

Eraſt. *Then* Thought thinks, *what* Grammar *or* Logick *teaches, that a* Song ſings.

Eug. No, but a *Singer ſings.*

Eraſt. *True,*

Eraſt. *True, and a* thinker thinks *or conceives a thought. So that it is plain (to avoid the Barbariſm of* Predicament, &c. *) that* thought *being the Effect of a* Thinking Power, *this,* I that think *(or my Soul) is not* thought, *but ſomething precedent to it.*

Eug. Your Inference is Juſt and Concluſive againſt me, if this, *I that think,* is my *Soul.*

Eraſt. *That 'tis not your* Body *is ſufficiently proved to your Hands, by a late* Author (a) *as alſo by your own Conceſſion, for* Modification of Matter *is not* Matter *it ſelf, unleſs Accidents are Subſtances, and Subſtances Accidents. And therefore 'tis ſomething diſtinct from your Body; I call it* Soul; *do you call it what you pleaſe, provided you give me the ſame Idea of it, that you have your ſelf. But firſt, what ſay you to your firſt Propoſition, is it* thought *or no?*

(a) Mr. *Bently's* Second Sermon againſt Atheiſm.

Eug. I'm Satisfied it is not.

Eraſt. *Very well, now let us ſee how*

far we agree together, I ſuppoſe in theſe three Points. 1. I think. 2. This I that thinks, is not my Body (or Matter) 3. *Nor am* I thought.

Eug. Right.

Eraſt. *Let the two firſt be therefore laid down for* Axioms. *I* Axiom. 1, 2. think. 2. This I that think, is not Matter. *Now we ſhall examine whether the Soul be a* Modification of Matter, *it's certain that it's either a* Subſtance, *or a* Modification, *for every thing in Nature, is one of theſe two.*

Eng. I ſuppoſe you take Subſtance and Modification in the Common Senſe, by the firſt you mean *ſomething exiſting by it ſelf*, and not tyed to this or that Figure or Mode, as a Stone is a Subſtance, whether it be under the ſhape of a *Cilinder*, a *Priſm*, a *Cone*, or other irregular form. By Modification you underſtand, that *which can only be in a Subject, and tho' it were deſtroy'd, yet the Subject may remain*, as Roundneſs in a Globe of Wax; which Globe being made into a Cube, the firſt Mode or Modification

fication ceaſes to be, and the Subject wherein it was, continues, and receives a New Modification of Solid Quadrature.

Eraſt. *Yes* Eugenes, *I take Subſtance and Modification in yur Senſe, and now I aſſert, that all Modifications are paſſive, and can't act upon Matter.*

Eug. Your Reaſon for that?

Eraſt. *A Modification of Matter, is ſuch or ſuch a Diſpoſition of parts: Now if ſuch a Modification could work upon or alter the parts of the Subject, it could Annihilate it ſelf; for when the Diſpoſition changes the Modification Ceaſes to be.*

Eug. What think you of Motion *Eraſtus?* 'Tis an Accident or Modification of Matter, and yet 'tis plain, it works upon Matter.

Eraſt. *Juſt as a Stone does, when 'tis firſt puſht on by ſomething elſe; you ſhall find no ſuch thing as Motion in Nature, that receives not firſt its being immediately from the propulſion of ſome Body, ſo that when we ſay* ſuch a thing moves, *we ſpeak improperly, and*

ought to ſay, ſuch a thing is moved; *I ſpeak of all Material Bodies whatſoever.*

Eug. What think you of Heat?

Eraſt. *I think with all Philoſophers, that* 'tis a brisk agitation of the fineſt Particles of Matter, firſt put in Motion from ſomething without. *If you examine the whole Creation, you'l find that no Modification whatever, is in its own Nature active, tho' perhaps you have ſingled out the moſt probable.*

Eug. Well, upon a Suppoſition that Modifications are paſſive, what is your Inference?

Eraſt. *I'll have no Suppoſition; either give one inſtance of the contrary, or grant what I Aſſert.*

Eug. I grant, *that Modification of Matter is paſſive.*

Eraſt. *Then let that be a third* Axiom. *Now I argue, No* (a) *Modification is eſſentially active, but every Soul is eſſentially Active, therefore no Soul is a Modification.*

(a) *Axiom.* 3d.

Eug. Prove the Soul to be eſſentially

tially active and I'll for ever give up the Cauſe of Modifications.

Eraſt. *Thinking is Eſſential to me; for 'tis by thinking only, that I can prove my Exiſtence Now.—*

Eug. Hold *Eraſtus*, how is thinking eſſential to you, if you cannot prove that you always think? Mr. *Lock*, in his *Treatiſe* of *Humane Underſtanding*, ſhews that a Man cannot be always aſſured, that the Soul thinks, as when he is aſleep; therefore 'tis not only my private Opinion that is againſt you in this Matter.

Eraſt. *With Submiſſion to* ſo great a Man *as you have mention'd, I anſwer, that this* I *or* my Soul, (*by which* I am what I am) *is only knowable by the property of thinking, and thence Demonſtrative of my Eſſence, Now if I am always I, I mean, if I am the ſame, whether I am a ſleep or awake (which I think no one will deny) then this I by which I am,* what I am *always* thinks, *tho' the Senſes are not always employ'd, And if Mr.* Locks *Inference be good*; that a thing is not, becauſe we are

not ſenſible of it in our Sleep, *then I will prove to him by his own Argument, that he has no Body, nor Senſes while he is aſleep, ſince when he is ſo, he is not ſenſible, that he has either* Body *or or* Sence, *ſo that notwithſtanding this Objection,* Deſcartes's *aſſertion is as valid, as it was before Mr.* Lock *engaged it, viz.* that thinking is of the Eſſence of the Soul.

Eug. But *Eraſtus*, how does this prove the Activity of the Soul?

Eraſt. *Much more evidently, than* that all the lines in a Circle, drawn from the Center to the Circumference are equal; *which you are pretty well aſſured of. I ſay, that the Soul* continually thinking, *or in other terms Exiſting, does continually act or exerciſe its eſſential property, in* Compounding, Dividing, Concluding, Rejecting, Chooſing, Doubting, &c. *and is therefore* Active, *unleſs doing ſuch things, is doing nothing at all.*

Eug. Tis very true *Eraſtus*, the Soul is *Active*, and Modifications are *Paſſive*.

Eraſt.

Eraſt. *Then the above Argument is good;* That the Soul is no Modification, *as you at firſt aſſerted.*

Dial. III.

That the Soul muſt neceſſarily Exiſt and Act, tho' in a ſtate ſeparate from the Body.

Eug. PRay, *Eraſtus*, tell me what you think the Soul is?

Eraſt. *I ſay, 'tis a Subſtance.*

Eug. Why ſo?

Eraſt. *Every thing is either a* Subſtance, *or a* Modification *of a* Subſtance, *the Soul is not the*

(a) Laſt, *therefore it is the* Firſt. *'Twas granted before that the Soul is not* (b) *Matter, as alſo that* thinking *was* eſſential *to its Eſſence; Therefore I define the Soul to be*

An Immaterial thinking Subſtance.

(a) *Axiom* 4. 2. cap.

(b) *Axiom,* 2. cap.

Definition of the Soul.

Eug.

Eug. But can it exiſt without the Body?

Eraſt. *Can't one Subſtance exiſt without another,* Eugenes?

Eug. Yes, Exiſtence ſimply conſidered, but whether a diſſolution of Soul and Body may not render each part incapable of acting ſeparately? Thus the principal wheel taken out of a Clock, not only becomes unactive it ſelf, but alſo leaves the reſt under an impoſſibility of motion.

Eraſt. *There's no wheel in a Clock ſimply conſider'd in its ſelf is eſſentially active, 'tis all dull paſſive Matter, and puſht on by Weights and Springs; But the Soul is eſſentially active, becauſe eſſentially thinking, as was ſhew'd before, therefore depends not upon any reaction or Contiguity of Parts, as Matter does, and conſequently can act either with or without the Body; As a Man that leaves one Mechanick Employ can Buſy himſelf in another; for the Clock only receives, and does not recommunicate action to the Clock-maker.*

Eug. But it appears to me, *Eraſtus*, that there is a re-action and mutual Commerce betwixt the Soul and Body, that the diſpoſition, or indiſpoſition of either affects the other; as for inſtance, if my Body is languiſhing and weak, my Soul appears low and dejected; and on the contrary, under grievous Diſtempers & Indiſpoſitions there may happen ſuch Diverſions and Complacency to my Soul, that I forget the Pain I endure in my Body.

Eraſt. *No, no, 'tis a Vulgar Error; the Soul is never weak or afflicted for the Indiſpoſition of the Body; It acts then as vigorouſly as at other times, becauſe 'tis always independant of the Body. Suppoſe a good Muſician plays upon an Inſtrument out of Tune, who blames his Art then, more than at another time? Or who affirms that his* viſive Power *is defective, becauſe a Cloth is put upon his Eyes? The Soul of Man is the ſame Sick or Well, Young or Old; 'tis only the Indiſpoſition of the Organs which puts the fallacy upon us: Nor do the*

torments

torments of the Mind at all injure the Body, otherwiſe than as an accidental Cauſe, 'tis not any Communication of its grievances that hurt the Body, for that is no ways capable of receiving them, ſince there is no Analogy betwixt thought and Matter, but the Body may be injured, when the Soul by an intenſe and ſevere Reflexion on ſome Impreſſing Idea, forgets to aſſiſt the Body in the proſecution of its juſt Demands, as to Sleep, Food, Motion, Reſt, *or other helps which are abſolutely neceſſary for the well-being of the Body, ſo that the Mind Communicates no Evil to the Body; but withdraws from it, to its prejudice, ſuch things as it wants, and thereby accidentally injures it. But to return from this Digreſſion, I ſay, that the Soul as it is a Subſtance, muſt exiſt in ſome condition or other.*

Eug. I granted before that the Soul will exiſt in a ſeparate eſtate, Exiſtence ſimply conſider'd, as a Man will exiſt 1000 years after he is dead, in ſome form or other; Perhaps that which you call your Noſe now,

now, may be part of a Fish or a Fowl within these 60 years, for Matter cannot be destroy'd. But how your Soul shall be Individual, and act in that individuality after its separation from the Body, I see no more reason than for a Stone which is thrown from a String, and thereby has Motion Communicated to it, shou'd be said always to Move in its individuality, when pulveriz'd and scatter'd into the revolutions of Matter, for tho' your Soul acts as you say, yet it's Evident, that it receiv'd this *action* from God, and therefore may in some sence be said to be a Modification of him, as well as we say a Stone receives the Modification of Motion from a Slinger, and we see there's an impossibility for this Motion or Modification to continue for ever.

Eraſt. *To this heap of Objections I answer, First, We can't suppose the individuality of the Soul lost, after the same manner as that of the Body; for the Soul being Immaterial, we cannot have*

have any Idea of Parts, Diviſibility, &c. which are proper to Matter. 2. *A Stone has no immediate dependance upon a Slinger; nor does a Slinger always exiſt to Communicate ſuch a Motion to a Stone: But God neceſſarily exiſting and by vertue of that Exiſtence Communicating Exiſtence to the Soul, which having once receiv'd* to be, *cannot ceaſe to be unleſs its Author either ceaſes to be or Annihilates it; and ſince we ſee no reaſon to believe he will take away its* Being, *I know not why we ſhou'd argue againſt our reaſon to prove it.* 3. *Action or Motion which is Communicated to a Stone, is only a Modification of the Stone, and not Eſſential to it: But Action in the Soul, (or in other terms* Thinking *or to ſpeak yet more properly* Exiſting,) *is of the Eſſence of the Soul, which is different enough from Modification, ſo that the Parallel is every way defective; and unleſs you can prove the Soul is capable of Attrition, Diviſion, &c. and thereby under a Capability of loſing its Individuality; Nay, which is yet harder upon*

you,

you, unleſs you can demonſtrate that Materiality and Immateriality have the ſame Properties, as alſo that Subſtances and Modifications are homogeneous. Laſtly, if you have no way left you to reconcile ſimple Exiſtence and Nonexiſtence, you muſt admit that the Soul will exiſt and act in a ſtate ſeparate from the Body.

Eng. Here's a great deal of Argument confuſedly put together, if you'll pleaſe to reduce it under particular Heads, and in few words, I ſhall be the better able to judge of it.

Eraſt. I was oblig'd to a Complex Anſwer, Eugenes, *ſince your Objection was of the ſame Nature, but to gratifie you again, I ſay in ſhort.*

1. *The Soul is a Subſtance, and muſt exiſt ſomewhere, and after ſome manner.*
2. *The Soul is immaterial, therefore indiviſible, and by Conſequence its Individuality is certain.*
3. *The Soul is Eſſentially active, as was prov'd before.*

Now I leave you to make your own Concluſion.

Eug. Indeed *Eraſtus*, I can ſay nothing material againſt the Premiſes, for now I am perſwaded of *the Individuation of the Soul as a Subſtance that muſt exiſt and act* in a ſtate ſeparate from the Body.

Dialogue IV.

That the Soul or this I *that thinks muſt be ſenſible of Happineſs or Miſery in a State ſeparate from the Body.*

Eraſt. *But after all, I ſee no great need to inſiſt upon the Individuation of the Soul; for if* thinking be of the Eſſence of the Soul *as appears above, then as we very reaſonably conclude that all Subſtances naturally muſt for ever exiſt, Exiſtence ſimply conſider'd; ſo, the Soul muſt always* exiſt, *or in other Terms* think; *thinking ſimply*

ſimply conſider'd; and as Subſtances *are always* Subſtances, *tho' ſometimes under one, ſometimes under another* Modification; *So the* Soul *is always a* Soul *or a* thinking Being, *tho' it may be imploy'd upon this or that Object; and tho' it ſhould not exiſt in its* Individuation, *yet every Particle (forgive the Nonſence of the Suppoſition) would think by it ſelf, which is as much as to ſay* exiſt *by its ſelf,* thinking *being of the Eſſence of its* Exiſtence. *Now* Eugenes, *if I can prove that the Conſequence of* thinking *does neceſſarily ſuppoſe* Happineſs *or* Miſery, *it's plain that the Soul when ſeparated from the Body is alſo either Happy or Miſereble.*

Eug. 'Tis very true, *Eraſtus.*

Eraſt. *Then, I ſay, that the ſeveral diſtinct Powers of the* Soul *or a* thinking Being, *whereby it applies it ſelf to this or that Object, are ſtill to ſome end or other; for Inſtance, why do I chooſe this or that thing? 'Tis evident, That* Choice *ſuppoſes a* Compariſon, *and where two or more things are* compar'd,

that which I make Choice of, I prefer to all the rest, because of some apparent or real Convenience *that it has above the rest; here's a design in this Choice,* viz. *a Convenience or a Good; and the end of choosing what is good, is to be Happy in its Possession.* Good is, *in other terms,* a Congruity betwixt the Powers of the *Soul* and the Object they fix upon; *if upon Tryal or Examination I find the* Choice *I make to be proportionable to my expectation, then there results what I call* Good *or* Happiness, *if the Contrary, that* disappointment *is what I call* Evil *or* Unhappiness.

Eug. This necessarily supposes, that what a Man chooses is always that which is, or appears to be, a Good; what think you, *Eraſtus*, of a Wretch that Hangs himself, or a Parricide, who contrary to his knowledge, and in Opposition to the Laws of *Nature*, contrives and effects the Death of his Father; it appears to me that he proposes neither *Good* nor *Evil* to himself; not *Good*, for he

he is conſcious that 'tis an ill Action; and is likely to have an ill Conſequence; not *Evil*, for we naturally flee from Evil and Miſery, and if this be Truth, then his Soul which was active all along in the Murder propos'd neither of theſe ends you mention'd, and by Conſequence might act in vain, or without any deſign at all, which oppoſes what you would now prove to me.

Eraſt. *In anſwer to your Objections; I muſt premiſe that in the Choice of* two good things, *one is always look'd upon as an* Evil *in Compariſon with the other which is preferr'd before it, tho' that* leſſer good *is ſtill a* Good *in its own Nature, and if compar'd with an* Evil *is ſo alſo by Compariſon: Again, in the Choice of* two Evils, *the* leſſer *is a* Good *in reſpect of the* greater; *tho' in its own Nature it be an* Evil, *and appears to be ſuch when compar'd with another* Good. *Thus a Wretch that hangs himſelf out of the way, does not do it purely for the ſake of hanging, or becauſe 'tis an* Evil, *but he looks upon*

to be a Good *Comparatively to, and therefore more Elegible than, ſome other* Evil *that he labours under. Your* Parricide *alſo feels the want of his Father's Eſtate, or finds that he is ſome Obſtruction to him in his Amours, or ſomething elſe; and whilſt he compares this* Evil *with his* reluctancies, *&c. the* firſt *appears more intolerable to him than the* laſt, *and therefore he chooſes it under the appearance of* Good; *or thus, the apparent* Good *that he promiſes himſelf, in the Murder, out-ballances the unfelt* Evil *which his Conſcience threatens unto him in the Perpetration of the Fact; Thus you ſee not only* Good *may be choſen, as* Good, *but* Evil *alſo under the appearance of* Good; *tho' Evil as an Evil in it ſelf can't be choſen by us, it being eſſentially repugnant to the* Reaſonable Nature.

Eug. Indeed, *Euraſtus*, I muſt confeſs we do always propoſe happineſs to our ſelves in every Act; but what is your Inference from this Conceſſion?

Eraſt. *Since* doubting, examining, chooſing,

choosing, refusing, &c. *are the several Acts or Exertions of what we call* Soul, *and that all these Acts are design'd for* happiness, *it follows that the Soul which thus Exerts it self is Happy or Miserable in these* Exertions, *since it either enjoys or misses the end in order to which it exercises its Powers.*

Eug. Your Inference is Good if you can prove, that the Soul can *examine, doubt, choose, refuse,* &c. in a separate State.

Eraſt. *You have granted already that it can Exist* (alias think) *in a separate State, and pray what is* thought *but an Exercise of* doubting, choosing, *&c. Can you think and not be imploy'd in the Corporeal, Divine or other Intermediate Natures for your Object? Can you imagine and not make use of simple or complex Idea's for your Subject? That is, in other Terms, can you think and not think; have Idea's and no Idea's at the same time?*

Eug. No, *Eraſtus.*

Eraſt. *Indeed 'tis impossible, for thinking supposes Objects and Modes of thinking,*

ing, deſtroy theſe, *and* that *is not, but you have granted that* that *is, therefore theſe muſt be ; and by Conſequence the Soul muſt be Happy or Miſerable in a ſeparate State.*

Eug. Well *Eraſtus*, I ſhall conſider of theſe things againſt the next meeting, when I hope we ſhall agree better than we have done formerly ; I muſt be going now, for my time is expir'd.

Eraſt. *I had ſeveral other things to have communicated to you, but we ſhall take another Opportunity for them ; in the mean time endeavour to lay by your Prejudices, and believe that I have no deſign but your own Happineſs, and a Profeſſion of my Friendſhip.*

Eug. I do ſo, *Eraſtus*, and acknowledge the Obligation.— Farewell.

Eraſt. *Farewel* Eugenes.

FINIS.

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thematical Tractates, who hath now by him a *Miſcellaneous Manuſcript* ready for the Preſs, which he intends to Entitle *Pleaſure, with Profit*, Conſiſting of Recreations of divers kinds, as *Numerical, Geometrical, Mechanical, Optical, Aſtronomical, Horometrical, Cryptographical, Statical, Magnetical, Automatical, Chimical, Hiſtorical*,. Publiſhed for ingenious ſpirits, to make further ſcrutiny into theſe (and the like) ſublime Sciences, This Book, when Printed will contain above *One hundred Sheets*, with near *Two hundred Cuts*. And to the end, that this *Work* may come to publick View in the *Authors Life-time*, he preſents the following Overture (for the promotion of it) to all *Maſters, Heads, Proveſts, Fellows, Scholars*, &c. *of both Univerſities*--- *To all Publick and Private Schoolmaſters, Uſhers and Scholars under them* —— *To all Gentlemen of Inns of Court or Chancery* —— *And to all other private Gentlemen, of what Degree ſoever* —— *The Propoſals are as followeth, viz.* (1.) The Subſcribers to give 13 *s.* 6 *d.* for each Book in Quires, whereof 6 *s.* to be paid at the time of Subſcription, and 7 *s.* 6. *d* at the Delivery of the Book. (2.) To encourage all perſons that ſhall Contribute to the procuring Subſcriptions for *Six*, they ſhall have a ſeventh *Gratis*. (3.) All who intend to aſſiſt in the Advancement of this uſeful Work, are deſired to ſend in their *Subſcriptions* with all ſpeed, unto the Perſons here under Named, where *Printed Receipts* ſhall be given them and if they ariſe to any Competent Number, the

Book

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